

Response to the Evaluation of the Global Fund's Gender equality and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities (SOGI) Strategy

15 November 2011

The Global Fund welcomes the findings and recommendations outlined in the independent evaluation report prepared by the Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation. Preliminary findings from the evaluation of the two strategies contributed to the development of the 2012-2016 corporate strategy of the Global Fund and recommendations from the final Pangaea report are now informing a number of transformative activities within the organization including efforts to optimize Global Fund investments in relation to gender equality and most at risk populations.

Professor Rifat Atun, the chair of the Global Fund's Internal Gender Task Team, responded to the evaluation saying: "This evaluation provides an excellent and timely opportunity to sharpen the focus of the Global Fund in ensuring that grants reach key populations and communities most in need."

"The evaluation findings will help direct our efforts in accelerating investment for impact in countries on gender, human rights, equity and health for mothers and children – particularly in the context of the Global Fund strategy 2012-2016."

The Global Fund Board requested a formative evaluation of the Gender Equality and SOGI strategies when they were approved in 2008 and 2009 respectively. The independent evaluation provides key recommendations for the Global Fund Secretariat, Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCM's), and Technical Partners.

The report points out that the Global Fund has set an important precedent by sending a strong message, to implementing countries in particular, of the importance of meeting the health needs of populations often overlooked in infectious disease strategies. However, the key test of the Global Fund's commitment to the Gender Equality and SOGI strategies will be sustained implementation across all the Global Fund's structures, continued funding support, and sound guidance and technical support for countries. It will need to include mechanisms to ensure both the Global Fund and its grantees are transparent in strategy implementation efforts, and accountable to the communities which they serve.

The Global Fund recognizes that despite progress and gains in the implementation of both strategies, further effort is needed to ensure that their implementation is prioritized at all levels of the Secretariat and through the Global Fund Strategy (2012-2016) and Consolidated Transformational Plan.

Specifically the Gender Equality and SOGI focus will now be reprioritized in line with the synergies and opportunities evident in the Global Fund Strategy (2012-2016) and the Consolidated Transformation Plan.

The Global Fund Secretariat plans to take forward the recommendations of the evaluation through the following action points:

1. The Global Fund Secretariat will focus on investment for impact through an approach that evolves the 'SOGI' focus to a focus on most-at-risk populations (MARPs) and ensures that 'women and girls' are prioritized in the context of a 'gender' focus.

A joint planning approach will seek to harmonize efforts across the Secretariat, underpinning the new Five Year Strategy (2012 – 2016) and will ensure, at all stages of grant making, an emphasis on key populations and high impact interventions. The Global Fund will engage with internal and external stakeholders for:

- Women and girls
- Men who have Sex with Men (MSM)
- Transgender people
- Sex Workers; and
- Injection Drug Users (IDUs)

2. The Secretariat focal point for gender work will undertake a strategic focus on women and girls in the areas of: 1) prevention of mother to child transmission (expanded 4-prong approach) and maternal, new born and child health; 2) the prevention of gender based violence and harmful gender norms; and 3) most at risk populations of women, specifically female sex workers and drug users. Pangaea recommends a sexual and gender based violence focus be included within the Targeted Pool for funding.

3. Secretariat focal points will evolve the 'SOGI' focus to a broader 'MARPs' focus with targeted interventions for a number of key populations including: men who have sex with men; transgender people; male, female and transgender sex workers; and injection drug users.

4. The Secretariat will continue to lead and coordinate training for Country Coordinating Mechanisms (CCMs), in collaboration with the CCM team and technical partners, to ensure equal access, meaningful representation and engagement of women and most at risk populations in CCM decision making processes. Capacity building is a priority for increased expertise when such programs are appropriate to a country's epidemic.

5. The Secretariat recognizes that countries need additional capacity building, guidance and technical support to translate the gender and SOGI strategies into practical programs and will support an explicit community system strengthening focus in reprogramming efforts and new grant submissions, particularly in instances where the CCM is ready to support proposals that address gender equality and sexual minorities.

6. As part of the grant life cycle and country-team approach, the Global Fund will work internally, and in collaboration with technical partners, to increase the quality of gender and MARPs programming and build capacities of countries through training and technical assistance of CCMs, PR's and partners with particular focus on the opportunities in the reprogramming of existing grants, improving gender-responsive programming and MARPs-targeting and involvement.

7. An explicit gender and SOGI lens will be applied by the Secretariat to actions articulated in the Consolidated Transformation Plan: transforming resource allocation, risk management, and grant management through an enhanced iterative grant management process that will include a focus on access to funding (new requests for funding and grant renewals). Explicit linkages to equity and human rights will be made, through the encouragement of in-country participatory equity assessments as a formal part of the periodic review of grants.

8. The Global Fund Secretariat will systematically reach out to brief and update new and existing Board and TRP members on Gender Equality (women and girls) and MARPs priorities and emerging issues.

9. The Global Fund will continue to build evidence and support the evidence-based programming for Global Fund grants, including the promotion of the collection and reporting by age and sex disaggregated data. The Secretariat will also explore the most effective strategies to collect and report data on program participants who identify as transgender and other sexual minorities, while at the same time ensuring the full protection of their human rights.

The Global Fund will continue to monitor and track its programs related to gender, maternal, new born and child health and MARPS through portfolio analysis and in-country case studies. The Global Fund will work with technical partners to develop further guidance and recommendations for countries.

10. Lastly, the Global Fund will enhance its leadership, advocacy and partnership work with key stakeholders and technical partners working in MARPs and gender-related fields connected to the three diseases. In particular the Secretariat will advocate in the area of gender, women and girls and will roll out a partnership and advocacy plan 2012-16 in support of key global initiatives such as the UNAIDS Investment Framework, the joint UNAIDS Accelerated Action Plan for Women & Girls, the Secretary General's Global Action Plan for Women & Girl's Health, and the global plan for the elimination of mother to child transmission. The Global Fund will work with civil society, networks of affected populations and UN partners including UNAIDS, UN Women, UNDP, WHO, UNICEF and UNFPA.

Annex One

EXTRACT FROM REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Twenty-Fifth Board Meeting

Accra, Ghana, 21-22 November 2011

The Global Fund Twenty-Fifth Board Meeting GF/B25/2

Accra, Ghana, 21-22 November 2011 1/32

GF/B25/2

Independent evaluation of the Global Fund's Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation and Gender Identities (SOGI) strategies

2.19 The Board initiated these innovative strategies in 2008 and 2009 to help stimulate demand for financing in important but neglected areas of health, particularly the response to AIDS. It also requested that the strategies undergo formative evaluation, which has been completed this year by the Pangaea Global AIDS Foundation, drawing on the experiences of hundreds of Global Fund implementers and partners, including at the Partnership Forum in São Paulo.

2.20 The evaluation report was released this month and provides recommendations for the Secretariat, Country Coordinating Mechanisms and partners. It notes that the two strategies have sent a strong message to implementing countries and partners about the importance of meeting the health needs of these key affected populations. It concludes that the test of the Global Fund's commitment will be sustained implementation of the strategies across all Global Fund structures and continued funding support for this important work. The full evaluation report and the Secretariat's response to it are available on the Global Fund website.

2.21 Because more effort will be needed to build on the gains to date, the Global Fund's gender equality and SOGI work will now move forward in the context of the new strategy for 2012-2016, consistent with its objectives of investing more strategically for impact and promoting and protecting human rights.